



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/750,001	12/29/2000	Scott M. Frank	BS00-428	6605
38823 7590 05/07/2007 THOMAS, KAYDEN, HORSTEMEYER & RISLEY, LLP/ BELLSOUTH I.P. CORP 100 GALLERIA PARKWAY SUITE 1750 ATLANTA, GA 30339			EXAMINER OUELLETTE, JONATHAN P	
			ART UNIT 3629	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 05/07/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

## Office Action Summary

### Application No.

09/750,001

### Applicant(s)

FRANK ET AL.

### Examiner

Jonathan Ouellette

### Art Unit

3629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 February 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 86-103 and 107-109 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 86-103 and 107-109 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 20070207, 20060828.
- 4) ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. 20061127.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Response to Amendment*

1. Claims 1-85 and 104-106 have been cancelled; therefore Claims 86-103 and 107-109 are currently pending in application 09/750,001.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112*

2. The rejection of Claims 86, 92, and 98 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, is withdrawn due to Applicant's amendments.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. **Claims 86, 92, 98, and 107-109 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hunter (US 6,298,327).**
5. As per **independent Claims 86, 92, and 98**, Hunter discloses a computer-readable medium containing a program for use with a computer (apparatus, method) for tracking innovations as part of a system for managing protection and licensing of intellectual

property assets (abstract, Fig.2, Fig.8), the program comprising: receiving intellectual property asset protection data (inventive disclosure, C2-C5), wherein the intellectual property asset protection data includes protection data corresponding to a plurality of intellectual property assets, wherein each intellectual property asset is defined and maintained as an asset by the existence of legally-enforceable intellectual property protection rights pertaining to that intellectual property asset (C8 L1-11, inventive disclosure, inventive identity, established date of invention or conception), wherein the intellectual property asset protection data further includes data related to a plurality of innovation disclosures, each innovation disclosure associated with one of a plurality of innovators (system tracks multiple inventions from multiple inventors); **determining participation data for each of a plurality of innovator classes (C3 L53-67, invention categorized with specific technology group)**; and storing the intellectual property asset protection data in an intellectual property asset protection database including a plurality of intellectual property asset protection data records (C2-C5, Fig.2, database).

6. As per Claims 107, 108, and 109, Hunter discloses determining participation data for each of a plurality of innovator classes (technology group), so that participation rates can be effectively tracked and managed (C3 L53-67, innovation tracked by technology group).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

- (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

**8. Claims 87-91, 93-97, and 99-103 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Hunter.**

9. As per Claims 87-90, 93-96, and 99-102, Hunter fails to expressly show wherein the plurality of innovator classes includes the class of employees of the organization, the class of non-employees of the organization, or the class of contractors of the organization.
10. However these differences are only found in the nonfunctional descriptive data and are not functionally involved in the steps recited. The method for tracking innovation disclosures by an organization would be performed regardless of the type of innovator class used. Thus, this descriptive data will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, *see In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994).
11. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have included a plurality of innovator classes, to include: the class of employees of the organization, the class of non-employees of the organization, or the class of contractors of the organization, because such data does not functionally relate to the steps in the method claimed and because the subjective interpretation of the data does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention.

12. As per Claims 91, 97, and 103, while Hunter does disclose storing organization data associated with the innovator (Para0109, type of originator), Hunter fails to expressly show the organization data related to the innovator and including at least one of affiliate organization, company, division, and business unit.
13. However these differences are only found in the nonfunctional descriptive data and are not functionally involved in the steps recited. The method for tracking innovation disclosures by an organization would be performed regardless of the type of innovator descriptive data used. Thus, this descriptive data will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, *see In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994).
14. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have included a innovator descriptive data (organization al date) to include: at least one of affiliate organization, company, division, and business unit, because such data does not functionally relate to the steps in the method claimed and because the subjective interpretation of the data does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention.

#### ***Response to Arguments***

15. Applicant's arguments filed 2/16/2007 regarding Claims 86-103 and 107-109 have been considered, but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Art Unit: 3629

16. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).
17. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

### *Conclusion*

18. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jonathan Ouellette whose telephone number is (571) 272-6807. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, 8am - 5:00pm.
19. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on (571) 272-6812. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned (703) 872-9306 for all official communications.

Art Unit: 3629

20. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 306-5484.

April 21, 2007

  
JONATHAN OUELLETTE  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600